



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2016-5306; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-010-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for certain Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH (Airbus Helicopters) Model MBB-BK 117 C-2

helicopters. This proposed AD would require inspecting each terminal lug and replacing any lug that has discoloration, corrosion, incorrect crimping, or incorrect installation.

This proposed AD is prompted by the discovery that terminal lugs with incorrect crimping may have been installed on these helicopters. The proposed actions are intended to detect incorrectly installed or crimped terminal lugs and prevent contact resistance and reduced gastightness between the wire and terminal lug, subsequent loss of electrical power, and an electrical fire.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Docket: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for sending your comments electronically.

- Fax: 202-493-2251.
- Mail: Send comments to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590-0001.
- Hand Delivery: Deliver to the “Mail” address between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2016-5306; or in person at the Docket Operations Office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, the economic evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations Office (telephone 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

For service information identified in this proposed rule, contact Airbus Helicopters, 2701 N. Forum Drive, Grand Prairie, TX 75052; telephone (972) 641-0000 or (800) 232-0323; fax (972) 641-3775; or at <http://www.airbushelicopters.com/techpub>. You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: George Schwab, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email george.schwab@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to participate in this rulemaking by submitting written comments, data, or views. We also invite comments relating to the economic, environmental, energy, or federalism impacts that might result from adopting the proposals in this document. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. To ensure the docket does not contain duplicate comments, commenters should send only one copy of written comments, or if comments are filed electronically, commenters should submit only one time.

We will file in the docket all comments that we receive, as well as a report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerning this proposed rulemaking. Before acting on this proposal, we will consider all comments we receive on or before the closing date for comments. We will consider comments filed after the comment period has closed if it is possible to do so without incurring expense or delay. We may change this proposal in light of the comments we receive.

Discussion

EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued AD No. 2015-0044, dated March 13, 2015, to correct an unsafe condition for certain serial-numbered Airbus Helicopters Model MBB-BK117 C-2

helicopters. EASA advises that terminal lugs with incorrect crimping may have been installed on some helicopters in production, and that an incorrect crimping die or crimp tool setting may have been used to terminate the lugs. According to EASA, incorrect crimping may adversely affect contact resistance and gastightness of the contact between the wire and the terminal lug. EASA further advises that this condition, if not detected and corrected, could lead to the loss of electrical power during flight. Because of this, the EASA AD requires a one-time visual inspection of the terminal lugs and replacement of affected lugs if incorrect crimping is found.

FAA's Determination

These helicopters have been approved by the aviation authority of Germany and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with Germany, EASA, its technical representative, has notified us of the unsafe condition described in its AD. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all known relevant information and determined that an unsafe condition is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

Related Service Information Under 1 CFR part 51

We reviewed Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin ASB MBB-BK117 C-2-24A-013, Revision 1, dated November 25, 2014 (ASB). The ASB specifies a visual inspection of the terminal lugs in the distribution and diode boxes for correct crimping, damage, discoloration, corrosion, and correct installation. If any deviation is detected, the terminal lug must be replaced. The ASB also specifies reporting certain information to Airbus Helicopters.

This service information is reasonably available because the interested parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require, within 100 hours time-in-service or 12 months, whichever occurs first, inspecting each terminal lug for discoloration and corrosion, and for correct crimping and correct installation. If a terminal lug is not correctly crimped or installed or if it has any discoloration or corrosion, this proposed AD would require replacing it before further flight.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD would affect 183 helicopters of U.S. Registry.

We estimate that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this AD. Labor costs are estimated at \$85 per work-hour. We estimate about 9 work-hours to inspect the terminal lugs for a cost of \$765 per helicopter and \$139,995 for the U.S. operator fleet. The cost to replace a lug is minimal.

Authority for This Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in "Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by

prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska to the extent that it justifies making a regulatory distinction; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared an economic evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH: Docket No. FAA-2016-5306; Directorate Identifier 2015-SW-010-AD.

(a) Applicability

This AD applies to Model MBB-BK 117 C-2 helicopters, certificated in any category, with a serial number as listed in the Planning Information, paragraph 1.A.1, of Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin ASB MBB-BK117 C-2-24A-013, Revision 1, dated November 25, 2014 (ASB).

(b) Unsafe Condition

This AD defines the unsafe condition as a terminal lug with incorrect crimping. This condition could result in contact resistance and reduced gastightness between the wire and terminal lug and a subsequent loss of electrical power, which could cause an electrical fire.

(c) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE Federal Register].

(d) Compliance

You are responsible for performing each action required by this AD within the specified compliance time unless it has already been accomplished prior to that time.

(e) Required Actions

Within 100 hours time-in-service or 12 months, whichever occurs first:

(1) Using a mirror, inspect each terminal lug for discoloration and corrosion, and for correct crimping and correct installation in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions, Table 1, and the examples in Figure 1 through Figure 5 of the ASB.

(2) If a terminal lug is not correctly crimped or installed or if it has any discoloration or corrosion, replace it before further flight.

(f) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Safety Management Group, FAA, may approve AMOCs for this AD. Send your proposal to: George Schwab, Aviation Safety Engineer, Safety Management Group, Rotorcraft Directorate, FAA, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76177; telephone (817) 222-5110; email 9-ASW-FTW-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) For operations conducted under a 14 CFR part 119 operating certificate or under 14 CFR part 91, subpart K, we suggest that you notify your principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office or certificate holding district office before operating any aircraft complying with this AD through an AMOC.

(g) Additional Information

(1) You may review the referenced service information at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy, Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177.

(2) The subject of this AD is addressed in European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD No. 2015-0044, dated March 13, 2015. You may view the EASA AD on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> in the AD Docket.

(h) Subject

Joint Aircraft Service Component (JASC) Code: 24 Electrical Power.

Issued in Fort Worth, Texas, on April 13, 2016.

Scott A. Horn,

Acting Manager, Rotorcraft Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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